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Duxbury Clipper



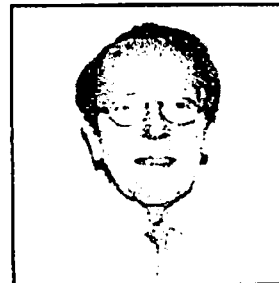
The John Alden House was built in 1653

Alden House Director Seeks Connections

By PAULA MAXWELL

Charles Coombs, the new Director/Curator of the Alden House, would like to see more Duxbury residents connect to one of the town's greatest historic treasures.

"I believe we are a nation of people looking for connections. Duxbury is an incredible social studies classroom along with Plymouth and this entire region.



Charles Coombs

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When people visit the Alden House you can see them trying to connect to John and Priscilla Alden's story."

Coombs enthusiasm is contagious. The former educator and curator of the Moses Pierce-Hitchborn House in Boston has spent his first few weeks on the job networking and trying to discover what the John Alden House means to the town.

"I was surprised to find visitors from Duxbury touring Alden House for the first time," Coombs said. "Some people thought it was a private home for Alden Kindred members only, when in fact it is America's home."

Coombs hopes to get that message out and to attract more regular visitors to the historic Alden House located off Alden Street near the town library.

"The newly constructed timber frame Alden Barn is a step in reaching out to the community," said Coombs. "We hope to develop new programs around subjects such as American history, colonial life, the arts, even music."

The barn, which seats nearly 50 people, also provides another venue for community events, he said.

Coombs' predecessor, Bob Edmunds, laid the groundwork for the next stage of Alden House outreach efforts

said Coombs who is clearly excited about the prospect of broadening community participation in programs and targeting local and regional visitors.

He officially took over the reins as director/curator on July 1 and sees part of his mission as that of explaining why Duxbury should feel so connected to the Alden House.

"Roots have become important in a nation of uprooted people. Our origins are starting to interest us again. I guess that is why Alden House attracted me. John Alden was a working man, a family man, a cooper. I felt closer to what I call the American idea than I have ever felt before at any historic site. Now I am interested in helping the community make the same connection," he said.

Coombs believes people will marvel at the many phases of historical periods reflected in the house and find the many artifacts of great interest.

There is also a gift shop with many interesting historical items and a recently published Alden Family cookbook.

Next month the Alden Kindred meet for their 99th annual meeting. One of the highlights of the August 7th meeting will be the official ribbon cutting ceremonies for the Alden Barn and the planning of gala events for the 100th meeting next year. Call 934-9092 to reserve a spot.